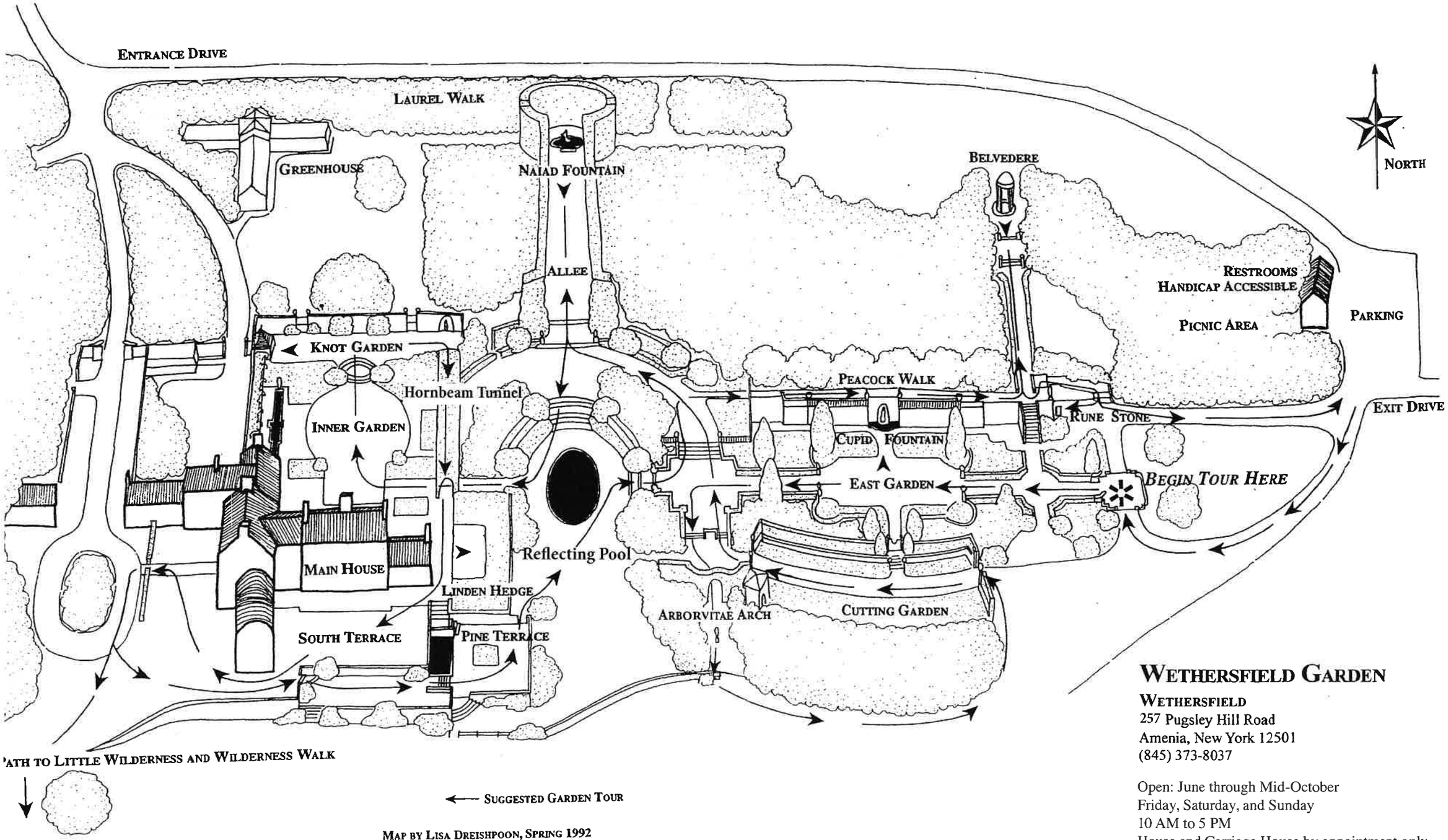

Map by Lisa Dreishpoon, Spring 1992
adapted from drawing by Gerhardt Liebmann, 1968

Wethersfield Garden

Wethersfield
257 Pugsley Hill Road
Amenia, New York 12501
(845) 373-8037

Open: June through Mid-October
Friday, Saturday, and Sunday
10 AM to 5 PM
House and Carriage House by appointment only
Call for information and reservations

WETHERSFIELD GARDEN

Wethersfield Garden is a three-acre formal garden created by Chauncey D. Stillman (1907-1989). It is in the classical style, after the Italian villas of the 17th century. It is a garden of landscape architecture, full of differing shades of green. It blends the formal garden with the native landscape. It is rich with views, vistas, statues, and, of course, colorful flowers.

The original garden, located on the north side of the house, *is* called the Inner Garden. It was created between 1940-41 by Bryan J. Lynch *in the Arts & Crafts style*. The remaining gardens were created over a 25 year period, beginning in 1947, when Mr. Stillman hired landscape architect Evelyn N. Poehler to help him design the classical gardens. The gardens were designed on an east/west and north/south axis. They were claimed from sloping pastureland and fields.

Please help us ensure the quality of everyone's experience by following a few guidelines.

- No pets allowed.
- Do not disturb or collect any plant material.
- Help maintain the beauty of these grounds by carrying out anything you bring in.

EAST GARDEN - The formal entrance to the garden is highlighted by Belgium blocks recovered from the streets of New York City and protected by a pair of hollow leaden 18th-century recumbent lions. Looking west, you see an expansive garden, ending with Wethersfield House. The low hedges blending with cones and balls of yew are used to create a green, sculptured panorama. The lines are softened by Korean dogwood, azaleas, lilacs, rhododendrons, and magnolias. The four corners of the garden feature clipped weeping beech trees.

CUPID FOUNTAIN - The retaining wall to the north was laid by Italian stone masons, using fieldstone, bluestone, and shale taken from stone walls on the property. Growing on the wall are sedum, dwarf campanula, and geranium leaf ivy. Centered in the wall is a fountain featuring "Cupid-on-Dolphin", a limestone statue created by R. Lavaggi after a marble piece located in the House.

ARBORVITAE ARCH - The arborvitae hedge and arch are enhanced by a pair of youthful figures playing pipes called "pan pipers". Mr. Stillman commissioned the English sculptor Peter Watts to create the pair in 1966. The archway frames a leaden urn from London.

CUTTING GARDEN - The annual and perennial beds in this area were used for cut flowers. House staff once used the cutting garden to provide the house with fresh flowers daily.

ARBORVITAE ALLEE - This wall of arborvitae measures 190 feet long. The leaden urns flanking the entrance have cupids beckoning silence in the garden. The ellipse at the northern end holds a pool coped with Swedish granite. The bronze statue "Naiad" is by the Swedish sculptor Carl Milles. North of the "Naiad" is the Laurel Walk, a meandering path featuring a pair of bronze "pan pipers" created in 1963 by the American sculptor,Jean de Marco.

REFLECTING POOL - Originally designed by Mrs. Poehler in 1955 as an elliptical swimming pool, it was transformed into a reflecting pool in 1991. Contrasting shades of green are predominantly seen among the shaped yew, clipped hedges, lilac, and viburnum trees against the lawn.

INNER GARDEN - The iron gates leading into the Inner Garden are flanked by a pair of marble putti created by Jozef Stachura, a Polish-born sculptor. The lawn is in a keyhole design edged by perennial beds. It features monks hood, Japanese iris, phlox, and peony. The center circular steps and mirror pool were designed by Bryan Lynch. The brownstone female figure "Rondo" was made by American sculptor John Flannagan. Above the pool is an arbor of grape and trumpet vines.

KNOT GARDEN - On the upper terrace are four knots, or geometric flower beds, designed by Mrs. Poehler. To the left is the "Grasshopper House", decorated in 1980 by the American artist Hight Moore, noted for his trompe l'oeil works. The oval scenes on the walls are favorite views of the garden and wilderness. On the opposite side of the terrace is a marble "Madonna" sculpted in 1988 by Stachura. Set in the wall over the bench are three limestone plaques created in 1947 by Watts. They represent "Expulsion from Eden", "Nativity" and "Resurrection". The hornbeam tunnel is comprised of young hornbeam trees being trained to form a new tunnel, replacing the old beech tunnel.

SOUTH TERRACE - This feature has four orange trees and mixed a lupine-columbine bed. The south perennial bed has a wide assortment of perennials including foxglove, veronica, and sedum.

PINE TERRACE - This is named for the white pine in the center of the stone terrace. It is enhanced by the goldfish pond with yellow water iris, water lilies, frogs, and goldfish. The linden hedge is formed with European linden trimmed into a hedge with pachysandra at the base and a euonymus vine on the rock wall.

PEACOCK WALL - The steps leading from the Reflecting Pool are flanked by a pair of de Marco's limestone horses, commissioned in 1959. To the left of the Peacock Walk is a large Korean dogwood. Copper beeches border the walk on the north side. The area behind the beech trees is planted with American beech, apple, European beech, white pine, and Norway spruce.

BELVEDERE - The walk leading to the Belvedere features a pair of limestone fawns by Flannagan, commissioned between 1937-38, and a pair of cherubs, created between 1988-89 by Stachura. The Belvedere, a six-columned circular tempieto, was designed by Mr. Stillman, Mrs. Poehler, and architect W. Dean Brown, in 1965. The name derives from two Italian words, *bel*, which means "beautiful," and *vedere*, which means "view." Plantings east and west of the Belvedere were created by Mrs. Poehler to shelter the garden and blend the formal with the native. She accomplished this using hawthorn, lilac, white pine, and high bush blueberries.

RUNE STONE - The obelisks along the balustrade were designed by Mrs. Poehler and created by Watts in the early I 970's. In the alcove is a rune stone, designed after a Swedish original from the 9th-century. It was created in 1960. At the bottom of the stairs is a limestone Madonna called "Immaculata" created by de Marco in 1957.